



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
 REGION 5
 77 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD
 CHICAGO, IL 60604-3590

JAN 21 2016

REPLY TO THE ATTENTION OF:

Wayne Dupuis, Tribal Environmental Program Manager
 Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
 1720 Big Lake Road
 Cloquet, Minnesota 55720

Margaret Watkins, Tribal Environmental Manager
 Grand Portage Band
 PO Box 428
 Grand Portage, Minnesota 55605

Gabrielle Holman, Environmental Services Manager
 Bois Forte Band
 1500 Bois Forte Road
 Tower, Minnesota 55790

Dear Environmental Program Managers:

EPA Region 5 recognizes that the Bands have a number of concerns about the potential impacts of the NorthMet Mine Project on tribal interests, and wants to ensure adequate coordination and consultation based on EPA's decision making roles in this project. Toward this end, I invite tribal representatives to meet with EPA so we can discuss the extent to which each Band wishes to coordinate and/or consult, and the best process for doing so.

In general, EPA has a role in reviewing the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404 permit, which will be informed by the Corps' Record of Decision. EPA also has an oversight role with respect to permitting actions by the state of Minnesota under both CWA Section 402 and the Clean Air Act, which will be initiated at some point after the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has completed its adequacy determination.

If you are interested in such a discussion, please let me know by February 26 (at walts.alan@epa.gov or (312) 353-8894) and provide a contact for us to work with in setting up an initial meeting by phone. Whether or not you choose to participate in this call, we continue to welcome your input and will continue to coordinate with you to keep you apprised of EPA's activities and opportunities for consultation related to this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alan Walts', written in a cursive style.

Alan Walts, Director
Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance